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**Noted Cornell Viticulturist, Robert M. Pool,
Remembered**

by Joe Ogrodnick

GENEVA, NY: Robert M. Pool, professor emeritus of viticulture at Cornell University, died at his home on Saturday, June 10, after a long illness. Over the course of his distinguished career, Pool's research, extension work and teaching contributed significantly to the science and practice of viticulture, and positively influenced New York's wine and grape industries.

"Throughout Bob Pool's career, he provided leadership in areas of viticultural research that had many positive impacts on the New York wine industry," said Thomas J. Burr, director of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, N.Y. "His work elevated the stature of viticulture at Cornell and earned him the respect and friendship of grape researchers worldwide. Bob will also be remembered as a highly effective and caring teacher and mentor who touched the lives of many Cornell students."



Pool's primary research interests included: mechanization of pruning, crop level as it affects grape and wine quality, sustainable viticulture, vineyard floor management and weed control, the effects of cultural practices and rootstocks on cold hardiness, interaction of disease (fungal, bacterial and viral), and vine productivity.

Pool was active in developing national grape germplasm repositories at Davis, California, and Geneva. He formed, and, for 10 years, chaired the Grape Commodity Advisory Committee to the National Plant Germplasm Committee. He served on the advisory committees of New York's regional grape extension specialists, on Cornell University's statewide fruit extension committee, and was an active participant in writing extension publications, organizing research tours and presentations, and training extension agents.

In July of 1997, Pool received the Cantarelli Prize for 1995-96 from the Italian Academy of Vine and Wine. The award was given in recognition of Pool's outstanding and original contributions to research in the mechanical regulation of crop load and fruit quality in grapes, as well as the impact and consequences of his work on the reduction of production costs for the vine and wine industry.

"Bob always managed to balance industry needs with practical trials involving varieties and clones new to the region as well as other trials involving viticultural practices that could be easily implemented in area vineyards," said Dave Peterson of Swedish Hill Winery. "His work on mechanical pruning and thinning changed a method that had first appeared to be short-termed and headed toward running a vineyard into the ground, into a more sustainable practice. His insight into practices that incorporated quality and economic reality were all-encompassing and led to solutions that helped industry not only survive in difficult times, but prosper."

"Viticultural research has been a vital part of the New York grape industry's evolution, and Bob Pool has been a leading force in that area," said Jim Trezise, president of the New York Wine and Grape Foundation. "His projects have covered a very broad range of issues of importance to grape growers, and the results of his

research have been published in parts of the world well beyond New York."

Pool was born in Sacramento, California in 1940 and grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area. He graduated from the University of California, Davis with degrees in enology and food science, received his Ph.D. in pomology from Cornell in 1974 and joined the Cornell faculty as an assistant professor of viticulture. He was named professor in 1988. He was a member of the American Society of Viticulture and Enology, International Society for Horticultural Science, and the American Society for Horticultural Sciences.

Pool recently realized a lifelong dream by opening his own vineyard and winery, Billsboro, in Geneva, N.Y., which features several varietals. He was proudest of his Pinot noir wines, made from a clonal selection based on his research.

Pool was an active member of the Presbyterian Church, in Geneva, where he sang in the choir, served several terms as Elder and chaired the Mission Committee. He also enjoyed singing with the Community Chorus and the MLK Choir. He will long be remembered as a generous host and gourmet cook who loved sharing good food and wine with friends and family.

Pool is survived by his wife of 25 years, Jennifer Morris, his sons Ron and Alex of Geneva, his daughter Margaret (Bruce) Mills of N. Palm Beach, FL; two sisters, Margaret Baker of Castro Valley, CA; and Judy (Jack) Langdon of Knaresborough, England; three grandchildren, several nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews. He was pre-deceased by his parents and a sister Shirley.

Memorial contributions may be made in Pool's name to the Mission Committee Fund for Youth Mentoring, care of the Presbyterian Church, 24 Park Place, Geneva, N.Y. 14456.

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